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ABSTRACT

In order to examine trends in educational reform in Kentucky, two studies of student portfolio evaluations as perceived by Kentucky teachers were described and compared. Under the Kentucky Educational Reform Act, student portfolios can serve as a basis for official evaluation of school performance. The first study, conducted in the fall and spring of the 1992-93 school year was based on surveys conducted by School of Education undergraduates with 260 teachers, most of whom taught fourth, eighth, or twelfth grades. The follow-up study, conducted in the fall of 1993, addressed changes in teachers' opinions and uses of the portfolio projects. Comparison found that all desired more training and opportunities to share experiences in structuring time and integrating portfolios into classroom work generally; that many listed the usefulness of portfolios in programs for parent conferences; that teachers most often wanted more training in how to manage and organize the development of portfolios; that teachers saw growing student interest and competence in the classroom as they assumed ownership of their own work; that students became well motivated to add to their portfolio collections as they saw their own work and the work of their classmates improving; and that student interactions improved at all levels. Appendixes contain study instruments and examples of teachers' responses. (Contains 16 references.) (JB)

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The Challenge of Reform: How Are Kentucky Teachers Changing Their Roles and Perceptions?

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A paper presented at the
Conference of the Mid-South Educational Research Association

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The Challenge of Reform: How Are Kentucky Teachers Changing Their Roles and Perceptions?

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Two studies of portfolio evaluations, as perceived by Kentucky teachers, were described and compared. The first study , conducted in the fall and spring of the 1992-1993 school year, was based on surveys conducted by School of Education undergraduates with 260 teachers, most of whom taught fourth, eighth, or twelfth grades. Teachers at these grade levels were chosen because they are responsible for guiding the development of the student portfolios which, under the Kentucky Educational Reform Act, serve as a basis for official evaluation of school performance. Districts and schools where performance does not meet established standards according to the reform package are to be given performance goals and a probationary status. If performance goals are not subsequently met, teachers, principals, superintendents, and board members may be removed. Teacher perceptions of their own adequacy relative to this important task were recorded and discussed. The follow-up study, conducted in the fall of 1993, addressed changes in teachers' opinions and uses of the portfolio projects. Insights developed on the basis of the follow-up interviews are described in connection with the original and later findings. Expressed needs for inservice training and/or teacher education training at the university level in order to make the portfolio assessment a constructive experience for teachers and their students are examined.

Since publication of *A Nation at Risk* (1983) and two reports on education put out by Goverors' Conferences (1989, 1990), there has been an outcropping of new programs to address the need for educational change across the United States. The state of Kentucky has become a leader in this movement toward reform legislation. An important component is adoption of a system of performance assessment based substantially on student portfolios. Under terms of the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 (KERA), standardized assessment will no longer serve as an indicator of student progress. Instead, the performance assessment will stress mastery of concepts taught and the ability of students to reason independently, relative to life decisions, and based on "academic expectations", previously called "valued outcomes" or "learning goals", in all subject areas (Kentucky Department of Education, 1993

and 1994). This performance based assessment has replaced traditional testing programs on the basis that standardized scores represent only a one-time measure and are not always reflective of what has been taught. It is a criticism not peculiar to Kentucky (Valencia, 1989).

Student portfolios now serve as evidence of individual learning as well as the degree to which a school system is successful. The portfolios which form the sampling for statewide judgment are drawn from fourth, eighth and twelfth grades.

The major objective of the introductory study for this paper was to conduct surveys with fourth, eighth, and twelfth grade teachers for the purpose of discovering their perceptions of this new approach to assessment and their observations regarding impact on learning and teaching (Cortez and Lawver, 1993).

Relevant principles and underlying assumptions.

Sometimes referred to as "authentic tests", performance measures for students may require a demonstration of achievement or mastery under various conditions. The method that Kentucky has chosen includes portfolios because of the involvement of the students themselves in planning and creating products that exhibit their skills, and also because of the ongoing nature of this kind of presentation. The portfolio itself may be described as: a purposeful collection of student work that exhibits the student's efforts, progress, and achievements in one or more areas; (it) must include student participation in selecting contents, the criteria for judging merit, and evidence of student self-reflection (Paulson et.al., 1991). All media for organizing and communicating learned concepts are appropriate for portfolio collections (Wolf et.al., 1991). These collections of academic and creative work should teach students that the thinking process is fundamental to educational growth, and that progress judged in terms of established standards sets the stage for independent functioning generally, and lifelong learning

ability (Wiggins, 1989, 1991).

On the basis of guidelines established by the Office of Assessment and Accountability, Kentucky State Department of Education, baseline measures of portfolios were gathered in the spring of 1992. Content areas at that time included language and social studies and science concepts. Math was added later for the 1993-1994 school year. Eventually, all content areas will be reflected in portfolios and will become part of the measurement criteria. Individual portfolio contents are judged and assigned ratings (scored) according to four levels of skill: Novice, Apprentice, Proficient, Distinguished. Standards for assessment at each of the four levels of rating, for grade levels four, eight, and twelve, have been clearly defined. Performance is required in context; instruction and assessment are ongoing partners. Thus, the evaluation of the state reform movement includes yearly sample selections of fourth, eighth, and twelfth grade portfolios from across the state.

This new method of evaluation is only part of the complete restructuring of Kentucky's school system. Other changes include multi-age groupings, cooperative learning methodology, and site-based management. (In addition to portfolios, NAEP-type tests with open ended questions form part of the total assessment package.) The implementation of KERA depends largely on energetic participation and leadership from the teachers, especially those whose students' portfolios will influence the future status of their schools. Since acceptance and understanding by the classroom teachers of the reform movement will be the determinant of overall long-term success, teacher educators require insight into how to train university education students to teach effectively in the new system. The purpose of the studies presented in this paper was to obtain the perceptions and expressions of teachers who are pioneering the reform in order to gain informed advice and direction concerning future training needs. Also, information gathered may instruct the planning of necessary inservice training for the

experienced teachers who are struggling to facilitate procedures and methods they had no opportunity to learn as students. It is clear, with regard to profound educational change, that effective reform must be supported and operationalized by experienced teachers; to rely on the training of new teachers is not enough when a total learning environment is being addressed (Glass, 1992).

***Method*:**

Survey questionnaires were created in order to obtain specific information from fourth, eighth and twelfth grade teachers regarding their own perceived adequacy for their assigned roles in the assessment of student progress on the basis of the portfolios generated under their guidance. Questions addressed demographics of their own backgrounds, such as years of experience, the positive outcomes they expected from the portfolio format for students and teachers, and problems they have observed or encountered. (see Survey Form, Appendix A). The follow-up study, completed a year after the first, asked similar questions about positive outcomes and suggestions, and added questions regarding the ability of the teachers to use portfolio input for assessment of students' needs and/or lesson planning. Examples have been recorded in Appendix D.

***Data source*:**

All Northern Kentucky University students enrolled in EDU 315, a required course in pupil assessment for teachers in training, visited teachers who were preparing portfolios for spring evaluation. For the first study, they met with the teachers on at least two occasions - at the beginning and at the end of the school semester. This schedule gave them the opportunity to see the portfolios in preparation, and talk with the teachers about their experiences in learning to help students develop their competencies.

Two hundred sixty teachers responded. Of these responses, 37 were discarded because instructions had not been followed in some particular. Thus, 223 teachers participated in completing two instructive surveys during the school year 1992-1993, 84 in the fall and 139 in the spring. During the first semester of the following school year (fall, 1993), similar data were gathered by EDU 315 assessment students. At that time, 95 good surveys were collected.

Results and discussion.

Both studies were basically descriptive, conducted as directed field research, with teachers to be visited selected by the Northern Kentucky University students because of location or prior familiarity. In most instances the visiting students did not know the teachers they visited before this assignment. The students generally reported a positive reception by the teachers.

Teacher reactions to survey questions were compiled and tabulated in terms of frequency of positive (yes) responses (see survey forms, Appendices A and B). For the first study, special attention was given to questions #5 (Do you believe you have had adequate training to fulfill portfolio requirements?), #12 (Do you believe that building a portfolio is a positive experience for students?), and #13 (Do you believe portfolio preparation is a valuable experience for teachers?). Note was also given to the number of years' experience reported by the teachers. Those who had taught for four or fewer years were considered to be new, or relatively inexperienced teachers; those who reported practicing for five or more years were considered to be "experienced". These designations were not considered to be arbitrary, since most school systems accept the fifth year of teaching experience as the tenure year. Also, the designation was surely not meant to infer anything about quality of classroom delivery or management. Rather, it was believed that indications of inservice needs and the relevance of recent university training might prove instructive. Comments of teachers were collected; those

which suggested a widespread concern relative to portfolio development are discussed later.

For the first study, two sets of surveys were collected, one during the fall semester of 1992, when portfolio creation was officially beginning its second year; the second set during the spring semester of 1993. Only those questionnaires which contained clear YES-NO responses were used, and only those that had been considered twice (at the beginning and end of the semester). Most responses (74%) were provided by teachers of the three grades used for state assessment (4,8,12), but others were obtained from teachers who were preparing portfolios at other class levels. Teachers of elementary and middle school classes with mixed level groupings were counted as teachers of Grade 4 or 8 if their grouping included that traditional level.

Graphs were drawn, and are reproduced here, to illustrate the degree to which teachers surveyed believed their preparation for portfolio production and assessment was adequate to the task at hand (statewide assessment of educational reform), the degree to which they felt positively about the compilation of portfolios as an experience in learning for their students, and as an instrument of feedback for themselves (Figure 1). Responses were analyzed separately for the two semesters, then they were compared at mid-year when all had approximately the same amount of time invested (Table I and Figure 2). Although some comparisons have been drawn based on differences between first semester and second semester responses, it must be emphasized that different teachers were involved in both surveys so that changes in perceptions may be explained by reasons other than the time of year or the fact that the major accountability, for the second semester teachers, was nearly over (Table 1). Responses from teachers in grades not yet required to compile portfolios as part of the statewide program of performance-based assessment were also counted and graphed.

As may be seen in Table I, fourth grade teachers generally reported more positive reactions to questions about whether portfolios are productive for students than did eighth or twelfth grade teachers. However, this difference was much less apparent in the responses of second semester interviews than of those collected during first semester. Another reason for caution in drawing conclusions about any apparent difference in enthusiasm relative to grade level is the fact that, during Semester I, few eighth and twelfth grade teachers were visited. The distribution is slightly better during Semester II; then, there was not a greater number of negative impressions from upper grade teachers regarding the value of portfolios for students.

Findings from the first study have been reproduced in some detail in order to establish clearly the basis for the follow-up comparisons. In the second study, conducted during the fall of l993, the total of 95 usable responses comprised: 56 fourth grade teachers, 21 eighth grade teachers, and 18 twelfth grade teachers. As in the first study, the great majority were experienced (see Table 2).

The smaller number of participants in the second study, and the fact that each teacher was visited only once, limits the conclusions that may be drawn. However, the tendency toward some overall similarities in both studies is surely evident. Clearly, the fourth grade teachers were more positive generally about the value of portfolios for their students than were eighth or twelfth grade teachers.

Both fourth and eighth grade teachers reported more conviction that portfolios provided important and usable input to teachers than did the twelfth grade teachers. Commenting on this difference, several teachers suggested that ongoing accountability for the education of twelfth graders may be less apparent at the twelfth grade level than at earlier levels. As will be noted, many reflective opinions were obtained from both studies.

TABLE I

Percent of Positive Responses by Teachers in the Initial Study to Questions about Benefits of Portfolio Creation, According to Grade Level and Years of Experience

GRADE 4

	Semester I				Semester II			
	Beg.Sem.		End Sem.		Beg Sem.		End Sem.	
	EXP.	*INEXP.*	*EXP.*	*INEXP.*	*EXP.*	*INEXP.*	*EXP.*	*INEXP*
Positive for students	93	69	89	69	98	76	96	94
Positive for teachers	85	54	89	62	92	92	71	76
	Total N=40 (Exp=27, Inexp=13)				Total N=68 (Exp=51, Inexp=17)			

GRADE 8

	Semester I				Semester II			
	Beg.Sem.		EndSem.		Beg. Sem.		End Sem.	
	EXP.	*INEXP.*	*EXP.*	*INEXP.*	*EXP.*	*INEXP.*	*EXP.*	*INEXP.*
Positive for students	56	33	89	33	89	100*	94	100*
Positive for teachers	33	33	33	33	89	0*	94	0*
	Total N=12 (Exp=9,Inexp=3)				Total N=19 (Exp=18,Inexp=1)			

GRADE 12

	Semester I				Semester II			
	Beg.Sem.		EndSem.		Beg. Sem.		End Sem.	
	EXP.	*INEXP.*	*EXP.*	*INEXP.*	*EXP.*	*INEXP.*	*EXP.*	*INEXP.*
Positive for students	33	0*	50	0*	87	0*	100	50*
Positive for teachers	17	0*	33	0*	66	50*	73	50*
	Total N=6 (Exp=6, Inexp=0)				Total N=17 (Exp=15,Inexp=2)			

*Designates population = 0 or too small to be reliable.
Total N, Sem.I & Sem.II= 223, including 26 OTHER GRADES for Sem.I and 35 OTHER for Sem. II.

TABLE 2

Percent of Positive Responses by Teachers in Second Study to Questions about Benefits of Portfolio Creation, According to Grade Level and Years of Experience

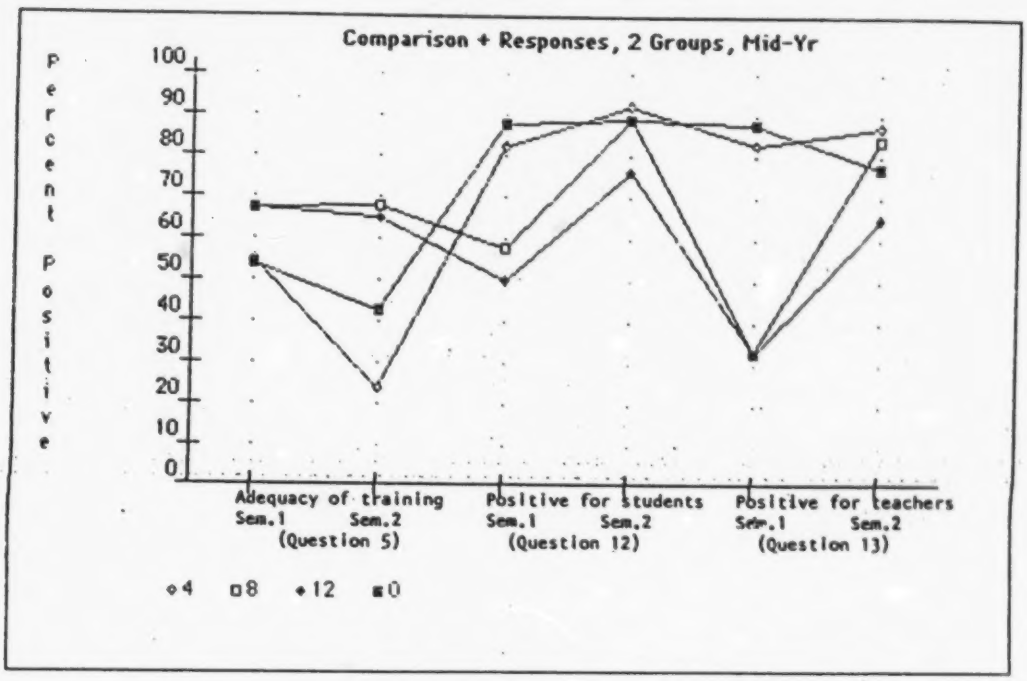
	Grade 4		Grade 8		Grade 12	
	EXP.	*INEXP.*	*EXP.*	*INEXP.*	*EXP.*	*INEXP.*
Positive for students	98	100	88	80	75	50*
Positive for teachers	89	75	69	80	56	50*
	Total N=56 (Exp=48, Inexp=8)		Total N=21 (Exp=16, Inexp=5)		Total N=18 (Exp=16, Inexp=2)	

*Population too small to be reliable.
Total N = 95, including only responses from 4th, 8th and 12th grade teachers.

As noted in Figure 1, fourth grade teachers appeared to be more positive generally than the eighth or twelfth grade teachers regarding student or teacher benefits from portfolios. All second semester teachers were more positive than the earlier respondents, and, in fact, were more positive at the beginning of the second semester than the earlier teachers were at roughly the same time in the school year (end of first semester). Because the second population of teachers was more than 50% greater in numbers than the first group, it may be speculated that the apparent difference in attitude was a function of the numbers. Another possible explanation may be that after a Christmas break, the portfolio materials looked better to the teachers than they did earlier in the year. Or perhaps the students themselves returned from their winter vacations with a refreshed approach to their writing assignments.

If, in fact, the second sampling of teachers was more representative than the first, it would appear that teachers at all levels did strongly favor the proposition that portfolios represent a positive learning experience for students, and many believe that they furnish valuable information to teachers. A possible exception would be the twelfth grade teachers, (Table 1), who appeared not to see much value for themselves in directing the development of student portfolios.

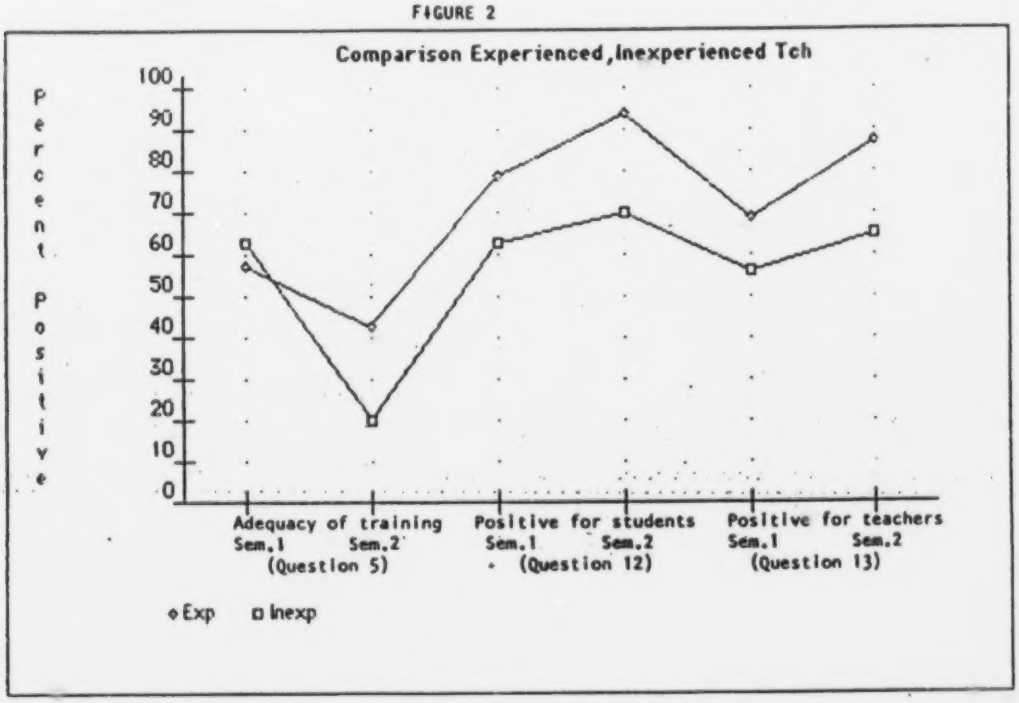
FIGURE 1



Percent of FIRST STUDY positive responses from teachers according to grade level at mid-year; comparison of groups, semester I and semester II (end of 1st, beginning of 2nd).

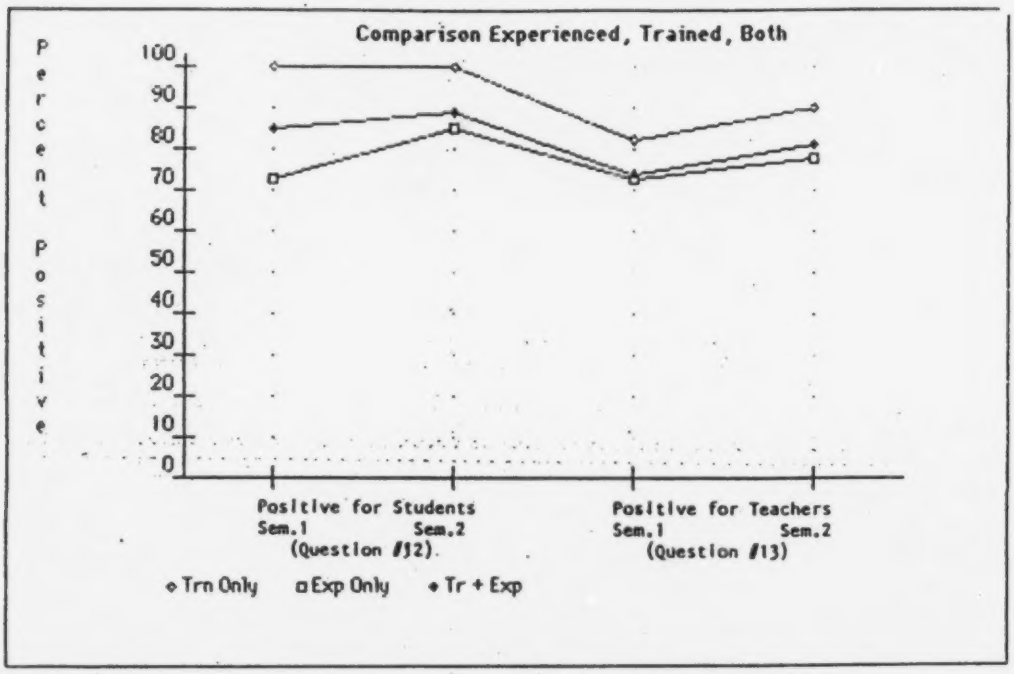
In general, graphs and data clearly indicted that large numbers of teachers were finding the collection of performance-based assessment materials in the form of portfolio activities to be a productive and positive experience for students and also for teachers, particularly by the end of the year. The percent of positive responses from experienced and inexperienced teachers at grade levels four, eight and twelve were compared (Figure 2). It is interesting to note that all Semester 2 teachers generally reported feeling less well prepared by training for the new reform portfolio assessment, but they were more positive about benefits of the portfolios for both students and teachers.

FIGURE 2



Percent of positive responses from the FIRST STUDY, mid-year (end, semester 1 and beginning, semester 2)from 4th, 8th, and 12th grade teachers, based on years of experience.

FIGURE 3



Percent of FIRST STUDY teachers at all levels who responded positively to questions about student benefits and teacher benefits based on whether respondents were trained (only), experienced (only), or both trained and experienced.

Figure 3 compares positive responses from teachers grouped according to: 1), those who reported feeling adequately trained (but were inexperienced); 2), those who had more than five years of experience in the classroom (but felt they were not adequately trained); and, 3), those who were both experienced and adequately trained. In Figure 2, only teachers from levels four, eight and twelve are represented; Figure 3 reflects all teachers at every level who were reported to be trained (only), experienced(only), or both. These may be the most competent teachers to address portfolio assessment, and their responses were strongly positive.

Because many teachers for all grades, and all levels, reported that they believed portfolios were more valuable for students than for teachers (especially during the first

semester), a chi square test of significance was calculated. It was theorized that the positive and negative responses in each cell, indicating perceived benefits or lack of benefits for teachers and students, should be equally divided. In other words, it was presumed that if portfolios are to be used for assessment, they should be viewed as equally valuable for both teachers and students; therefore, in other words, all "yes" responses and all "no" responses would be evenly divided. A chi square of 4.16 was obtained, which was significant at the .05 level of probability and indicated a difference in the degree to which teachers saw portfolios as useful learning experiences for students, and as helpful tools for themselves. It also suggested a need for better training of teachers in the use of authentic assessment practices so that they and their students can realize the benefits of portfolio feedback.

Comparisons, first and second studies.

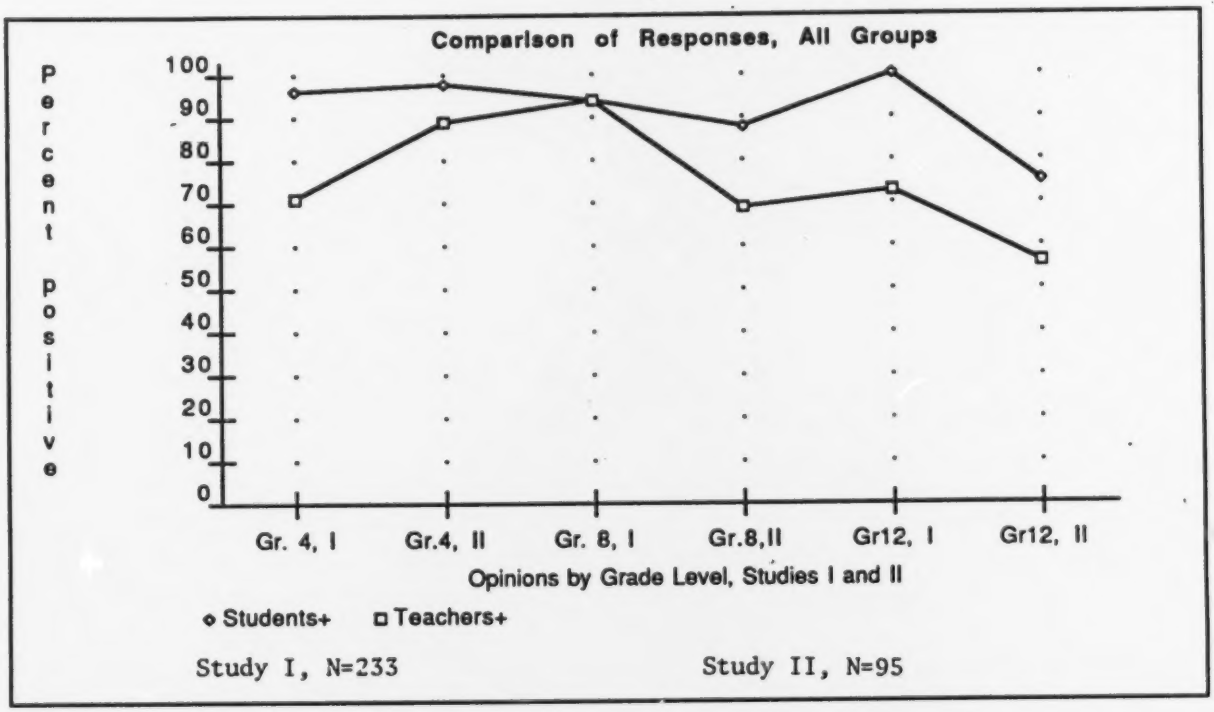
The purpose of a follow-up study was to examine the stability of teacher perceptions of portfolio preparation for statewide assessment measures as KERA begins to develop its own experience base and proceeds into the future. The second study questioned teachers who were beginning to guide their students' portfolio productions for the third annual assessment. Questions to be examined were: *1,* Did teachers respond positively to the same degree they had in the first study regarding the value of portfolio production for students?; *2,* Did teachers respond positively to the same degree they had in the first study regarding the value of portfolio production for teachers?; *3,* Were positive configurations by grade level similar in both studies?

Additionally, a Likert Scale to inquire about relative degrees of positive opinions was circulated to 24 teachers in addition to those who were visited for the second survey. It was expected that information from this measure would yield additional information about

developing teacher perceptions when a different, more structured format was used.

Because the survey questions addressed during the first study elicited simple "yes"-"no" responses, and the same was true of the second major study, comparisons were tested by chi-square measures. First, differences or similarities in teacher opinion regarding the value of portfolio projects for students were measured by grade level. (See Figure 4)

Figure 4



Percent of teachers responding positively to portfolios as a good experience for students compared to being a good experience for themselves.

There were no differences in responses from fourth grade teachers, experienced and inexperienced, regarding student profitability. Generally, the teachers at this level indicated that they observed genuine student enthusiasm and growing confidence in the portfollio projects, and their written comments were largely descriptive of positive student behaviors.

Eighth grade participants in the first study included too few inexperienced teachers to consider them a separate population, so all responding teachers were compared with all responding eighth grade teachers from the second study. No difference in positive opinion regarding student growth were discovered. At the twelfth grade level, again, all teachers were compared as one group because of the few inexperienced teachers participating. There was a significant difference noted ($X2=4.31$; $p<.05$), with teachers from the first study reporting more positive opinions than those from the later study.

Data from the second comparison, teachers' opinions regarding the value of portfolio production for their own use, indicated responses which were not as positive as those directed toward student value in either study. However, the experienced fourth grade teachers from the second study responded in a significantly more positive manner than had their peers during the initial survey ($X2= 4.51$; $p<.05$). This difference was based on responses of experienced teachers; inexperienced fourth grade teachers did not answer differently from those surveyed earlier.

For eighth grade teachers, there was some difference when all teachers from both groups are compared. It was the first group which was more positive, and the difference was measureable, if not significant ($X2=2.33$; $p>.10$). As noted earlier, few inexperienced teachers in the first group did not permit a separate comparison between experienced and inexperienced teachers at eighth grade level, and this condition was also true regarding the twelfth grade teachers.

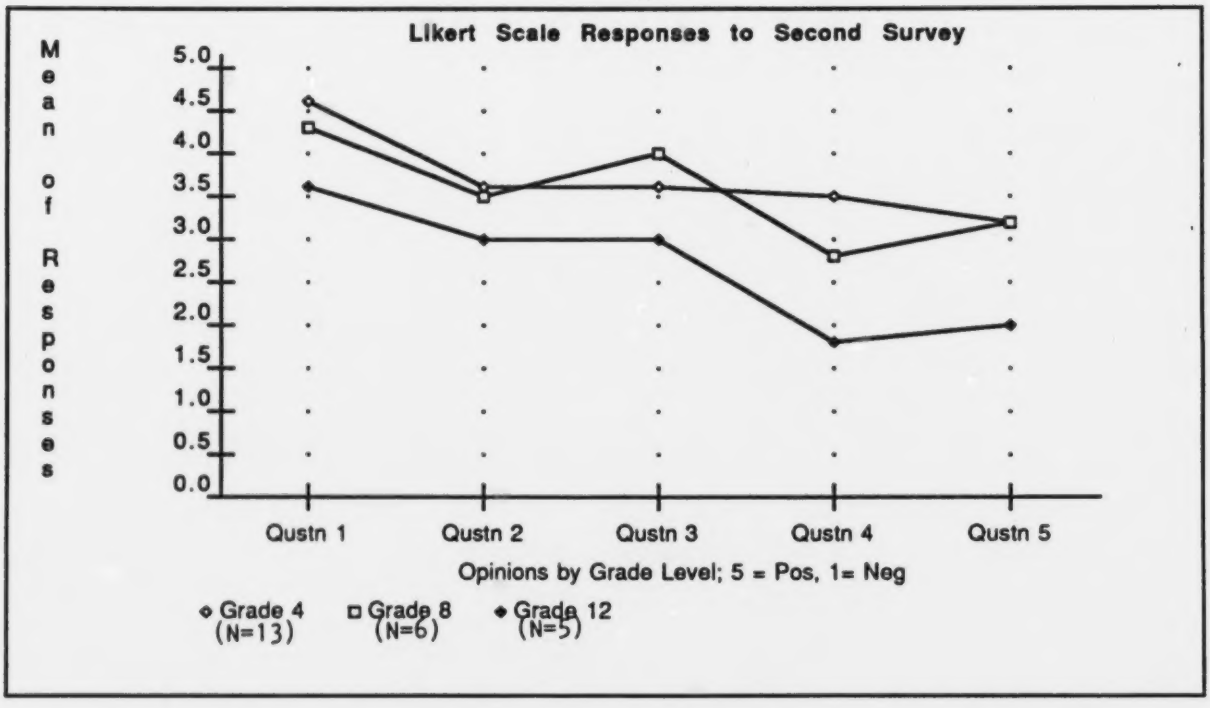
Among twelfth grade teachers, there was no difference of opinion between participants in the first and second studies regarding usefulness of portfolios for teachers.

A significant difference ($X2=6.06$; $p<.02$) was noted between opinions about student and teacher profitability from portfolio participation in the second study. This result was

similar to that derived from the first study ($X2=4.16$; $p<.05$), and both reported more positive opinions on behalf of student benefits than of teacher benefits.

Finally, responses to the distributed Likert Scale may be seen in Figure 5. The form and rating scale are printed in Appendix C. Comparison of grade level responses clearly suggested that twelfth grade teachers appeared to be less positive about portfolio projects generally than were fourth or eighth grade teachers, and that they were negative about using feedback from the portfolios either for lesson planning for the class, or providing individual skill information. Thus, the portfolio as an instrument of ongoing assessment within the total teaching act appeared to be operative mostly at grades four and eight.

Figure 5



Mean of responses ranging from very positive (5) to very negative (1) to questions distributed to 24 teachers, three grade levels.

Comments from teachers and conclusions.

While all comments were read from both studies, particular attention was given to those repeated most often. At all levels, there was expressed a desire for more training and opportunities to share experiences in structuring time and integrating portfolios into classroom work generally. Many of these comments came from teachers who said they had learned much about planning and organizing by doing, and they were looking forward to a good experience during the next school year. They wanted to share the techniques that proved helpful to them. They mentioned specific problems with integrating the portfolio projects into regular classroom work as part of the curriculum.

When teachers spoke in specifics about felt inadequacies, they most often mentioned a desire for training on how to manage and organize the development of portfolios. Mentoring and regular meetings for sharing methods were requested by teachers who reported that they had been trained for this task, as well as those who said they had not been prepared. Inservice might be especially productive if it addresses the use of portfolios in all subject areas as a common mode of communication and record-keeping, and not as "something extra" to fit into the day. Several teachers in the second survey suggested that this problem of perceiving portfolios as something apart from regular classroom learning may partly cure itself as portfolios become required in all content areas. Faculties will surely find ways to work together, integrating materials, and collaborating on portfolio activities as well as evaluations and judgments, with the students, about final portfolio entries.

Widely varying schedules were noted. Some teachers reported working on portfolios daily, others only twice monthly. This may emphasize again that integrating the experience into the classroom experience generally has been difficult, especially during the first two years of portfolio evaluation. Some teachers who noted the difficulty mainstreamed children had with

the portfolio assignments mentioned future contents that might include video or audio presentations. Barton and Collins (1993) have pointed out that visual examples of growth are surely appropriate for portfolios (especially since portfolios may first have been used by the art departments of academia). School libraries may be expanded to furnish cameras, clay and construct materials, video and audio tapes. Authentic assessment also lends itself well to displays, and poster entries, and the visual nature of these kinds of documents may be especially motivating and stimulating to other students. Teachers in both studies reported the interest students demonstrated in each others' portfolios, especially at fourth and eighth grade levels.

The usefulness of portfolios in progress for parent conferences was listed by many. Generally, comments at every level tended to report that students do demonstrate growing interest and competence in the classroom as they assume ownership of their own work and learning experiences. Several teachers in the second study reported on their growing use of rubrics for a variety of classroom exercises, and the interest parents expressed in lesson rubrics as reporting vehicles.

Teachers expresssed a need to understand more specificlly how the rubrics of official, statewide assessment were applied and how they could recognize qualifications for Proficient and Distinguished performance in their own students' work. Many noted that students became well motivated to add to their portfolio collections as they saw their own work, and the work of their classmates, improving. The exercise reportedly improved student interaction at all levels. In many instances, after noticing positive effects for students, respondents pointed out stressful effects on teachers. Some reported improved insights into their students and their educational needs; they indicated that careful reading of their students' portfolios provided an excellent guide for future educational objectives (Ex: "these ongoing critiques form the basis for follow up teaching" and "the students are motivated because, in a

way, they have asked and the teacher has responded"). In discussing the use of portfolios for stateside evaluation, several second study teachers questioned the reliability of the measure. This concern about the technical aspects of performance assessment appeared to be a new consideration in the second study. A 1994 report from the Kentucky State Department of Education indicated that the measuring procedure is believed to be strong in both validity and reliability, but other experts have questioned this and, undoubtedly, the topic will stimulate continued debate.

Greater effort from students has become evident in many classrooms, and an explanation voiced by some teachers indicated that the students now believe they are writing for a purpose. Some stated that the experience was mainly valuable for new teachers and that many experienced teachers were, before the reform legislation, developing writing folders and journals in their classes. Student decision-making regarding final portfolio entries was seen as good encouragement for learning to accept responsibility for their own progress, especially in the second study. Some teachers noted the applicability of portfolios to different cultures as a positive and productive characteristic for individualizing student interest and backgrounds as well as for building over-arching thematic learning experiences. Teachers of primary level groupings commented on the usefulness of portfolios for establishing exit criteria. Many wrote that too much depends on the quality of their students' portfolios and that other faculty members sometime look upon the assignments as the exclusive responsibility of the language arts teachers. As math portfolios were introduced, second study teachers reported the perception that preparation for the math projects was better than the initial preparation for the first writing portfolios.

Implications for the future.

The development of various assessment measures that require evidence of students'

abilities to apply information constructively and creatively in the real world ("authentic assessment"), will surely broaden (Wiggins, 1989). Kentucky is not the only state where portfolios have been selected for evaluation of learning, and other forms of authentic assessment based on completed products are permitting displays of teacher as well as student creativity. Matrials may include visual and sound media as well as three-dimensiional products. Creative use of higher learning goals will inevitably flow into use of exhibits - a sort of mobile or three-dimensional portfolio brought to life. More varied use of media should enable learning disabled or otherwise handicapped students to find gratifying vehicles for demonstrating their ideas. Adjustments are ongoing in Kentucky to modify portfolio requirements, where appropriate, for handicapped students.

These kinds of developmental projects and their evaluation are new frontiers for many educators and all problems have not been solved. The important considerations of validity and reliability of assessment are issues still being debated (Bishop, 1993). Elbow (1991) has persuasively argued that portfolios are surely good examples of student performance with obvious face validity. The real problem is reliability of evaluation. Kentucky may be in the forefront on this issue also. Detailed rubrics for evaluation are being used in connection with all projected learning outcomes and teachers are being trained to understand, write and apply these measurement instruments.

It must be noted that many teachers in both studies, while commenting that portfolios represent a positive learning experience for students, did not see equal value in the exercise for themselves. Perhaps these comments indicate inadequate insight into using portfolios - or other forms of authentic assessment - for personal questioning. Like any other measure, these products must infer not only the students' growth, but also the teacher's effectiveness. Thus, learning to search student work for direction and feedback completes the cycle. Some teachers

in fact, may not be getting the full value and benefit of this opportunity to know with confidence that they are now obtaining, and addressing, heretofore elusive evidence of student educational needs. As noted in the second study, twelfth grade teachers may be less likely to use the portfolios for lesson feedback than teachers of younger students. Perhaps this is true of any testing that is not perceived to be closely related to the specific futures of twelfth grade students. In the coming years, a logical next step might be networking with universities and technical school admissions programs in a way that will affirm the value of high school performance projects on a level comparable to, or compatible with, established standardized instruments such as the SAT, CEEB, and ACT.

Since Kentucky is presently serving as a model for the nation with its broad and deep reform measures, and because a number of other states are moving toward performance-based assessment in the form of portfolio production (Wolf et.al., 1991; Camp, 1990), these early experiences of the teachers who are actually carrying out the reform, and who bear the responsibility for accountability of their school district and its future status, should be of interest in preparing programs for students in training at the university level, as well as effective inservice training for teachers already in the field. As school reform spreads across the nation (National Governors' Association, 1989; 1990), and the demand for national standards grows, it will be most important that the teachers who must carry out reforms do actively accept and support change. For what is expected of them, these teachers should have the benefits of composite educational experiences with these new reform activities to whatever extent they can be provided.

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APPENDIX A

Portfolio visitation and survey form

We appreciate the input that may be gained from teachers who actually are compiling portfolios for the purpose of student assessment.
Please ask the teacher you visit to respond to the following questions. Enter the completed questionnaire into your own portfolio for safekeeping after your first visit.

Schedule your visits so that at least eight weeks elapse between them. After your second visitation, please ask the teacher if she would, at that time, change any of her previous responses. If so, enter those changes in the spaces provided.

Grade or level of students in class_____
Number of students_____
Number of years of teaching experience_____
Did you obtain your teaching certificate from an Kentucky university?____
Year of graduation with teaching certificate._____

	1	2
1. Are you (and your students) preparing portfolios?	_____	_____
2. If so, is it because they are required?	_____	_____
3. Have portfolio preparation methods and techniques been clearly reviewed with you?	_____	_____
4. Have portfolio content reequirements been clearly reviewed?	_____	_____
5. Do you believe your training has adequately prepared you to fulfill these requirements?	_____	_____
6. Do you believe that you should have additional inservice work specific to portfolios?	_____	_____
7. Did you and your students prepare portfolios last year?	_____	_____
8. Do you believe you have a good understanding of performance-based assessment, as defined by KERA?	_____	_____

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	1	2
9. How often do the students work on their portfolios?	____	____
10. Do students express enthusiasm in collecting examples of their best work for portfolios?	____	____
11. Do you have a special organizational plan for your portfolios? (Ex: Directing class to work on specific entries according to a schedule or routine?)	____	____
12. Do you believe that building a portfolio is a positive experience for students?	____	____
12a. Are there exceptions to your response to #12? (If your answer is 'yes' to this question, please briefly describe the exceptions.)	____	____

(Changes to this response at second visit?)

---

13. Do you believe portfolio preparation is a valuable experience for teachers?	____	____

13a. If 'yes' on #13, briefly state why or why not.

Any change in opinion at second visit?_____

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14. What are the most favorable/ unfavorable aspects?

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15. If you could have help or additional training with any aspect of portfolio production, what would it be

Appendix B

Survey questions; Survey #2

Assignment for 315, Friday class, October 15, 1993

Visit at least two teachers who are preparing portfolios as a basis of performance-based assessment.

Be sure at least one of them teaches fourth, eighth or twelfth grade.

(If you do not visit a Kentucky school, any teacher in Ohio or Indiana who has been doing portfolios last year and this will be okay.)

Ask them:

1. If they find the experience valuable for students. (yes or no)

2. If they find the experience valuable for teachers.

3. If they are using input from the portfolios more effectively for (a) assessment of student needs, and (b) future lesson planning than they did last year, or when they first started with portfolios.

4. Ask for the three most positive results of portfolios.

5. Ask for the three most non-productive or negative aspects.

6. Ask what specific help they would like to have provided to them.

7. Ask what specific advice they would give new teachers regarding the development of portfolios.

Appendix C

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly agree

Grade level_____
Years of teaching experience_____
Date_____

1. Portfolio development is a positive experience for students. _____
2. Portfolio development is a positive experience for teachers. _____
3. Portfolio development is easier for me this year than last. _____
4. I use portfolio feedback for future lesson planning. _____
5. I use portfolio feedback to help judge individual student skills. _____

Comments or suggestions:

The information provided by this survey will be used as part of an ongoing study of teachers" perceptions of portfolio evaluation in Kentucky. All comments are confidential. Thank you for responding to the survey.

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Department of Education
For further information and/or results, contact me at: BEP 476, NKU.
Phone: 572-5624.

APPENDIX D
Examples of Teachers' Responses

It (portfolio preparation) is a positive experience that helps students to see what they have learned over time. It is encouraging for the teachers and the students to see obvious progress. However, I don't believe we got adequate training in putting together portfoilos - but this year we were better prepared.

Portfolios very favorable for students - they are learning a lot. Very unfavorable from the point of view that assessment is too subjective. We need help; we need more people to help conference with students and teachers need more information about the types of writing assessors will be looking for.

As a new teacher in first grade, I find the portfolio easy to use and good for interpreting progress. A portfolio is a flexible way of assessment. It can meet the needs of the students better than objective tests. I would like to learn more about the organization of portfolios.

Keeping portfolios on one subject is a good experience, but the demand which is being placed on teachers to keep portfolios in many content areas is too much to expect. Also, there is lack of storage space. Portfolios are a good record of past performance as well as present, but they are too time consuming and we don't have enough space. I would like to have inservice training that is a step-by-step walk-through of an actual experience from beginning to end: Project, Performance, Assessment. Show examples. Get someone who knows what should be done and how the finished work will be evaluated.

The portfolios are driving our instruction now, forcing us to change our methods of teaching to ways in line with KERA. Last year, the first year for writing portfolios, we did not receive adequate training in any area, contents, scoring, management. Math, this year, was much better. The time factor is troubling. Trying to find time for thematic study, student centers, computers, etc., is quite a challenge.

It is good for giving students confidence in their judgment and thinking. It is less teacher directed. The students have a voice in what goes into their portfolios. The most favorable aspect is by having students write in all areas, they need to have a better understanding of the material than just memorizing facts.

If teachers use them to communicate with parents, help students work on troubled areas, and use as a tool for heightening students' self esteem, it can be a valuable experience. Teachers like to see their students progress. Students take pride in their work when it is kept this way. An unfavorable aspect is the way portfolios could be used to gauge how well teachers are teaching rather than how well students are doing.

Poor students are frustrated by the portfolios, but it does make me emphasize writing in every subject area, which may eventually improve skills. The portfolios are very time consuming; also, instead of just writing, students should be able to choose anything of value they have produced to include.

Its ridiculous to produce these wonderful portfolios every year, then take them away for assessment of the school system, with the child not getting them back. They should be returned,

so that there is continuity for the child from year to year. The teachers need to see last year's work and so do the students.

I have to admit that the experience is very positive for students to look back over their work and see how much progress they have made. But we lacked the proper training; this year has been a lot better for us all.

Since portfolios are required, teachers will learn over the years and they will get better at managing them. They will improve their own preparation techniques, and learn from other teachers. Maybe extensive inservice preparation would not have helped that much. Everybody has to learn this by doing it...everyone agrees that the second year is easier, and most have plans for what they will improve and change for next year. It is time management and integrating these portfolios into classroom work generally that takes the most practice.

There is nothing better for teaching students to sort out their ideas and stay focused.

Intensity of getting portfolios ready for evaluators is stressful. It will be better when all teachers are doing portfolios so fourth and eighth grade teachers are not alone in their buildings.

Smaller classes are vital for good writing. Everyone doing portfolios needs a cooperating and competent computer teacher working alongside.

Teachers can see what the students think is valuable.

Portfolios are forcing all teachers to do a better job. Isn't that what KERA is supposed to be about?

The math portfolios allow students to see a relevant use for the mathematics taught in class.

How reliable and valid are the evaluation results of our students' portfolios? Students might be learning a lot more than what will show up in the pieces chosen for their portfolios.

Some students are trying out inventive ways to say what is on their minds but they need a lot of examples to get them started because most of them don't read.

The quality is better - better ideas and better words.

Does the requirement to write become, to the student, a requirement to write without first accumulating solid information? I am talking about papers relative to the content areas. We need to remember that unfounded ideas may add up to empty writing. I wish we had a yearly measure of factual knowledge.

To use the portfolios for lesson planning, I use a checklist for keeping track of the kinds of mechanical errors students are making. Correcting mechanical errors is a form of critical thinking.

Several students have surprised me with the quality of the work they have submitted for portfolios. It is motivating for them to see their own ideas written down.